

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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A FAMOUS OLD ENGLISH BOYS' JOURNAL

By Henry Steele

"The Boys of England" was a most popular boys' journal and enjoyed a long run, from 1866 to 1899. The first 9 numbers were edited by Charles Stevens after which it was taken over by Edwin J. Brett.

For a journal to have a continuous run of 33 years, speaks well for it and there is no doubt that Brett was a thorough sound business man.

He knew what to give the boys and he also knew how to retain their patronage. For instance, he would take care not to finish up a serial story until he had a new one well started. The stories were of a varied character, historical, school, Pirate, adventure, etc.

There was one type of story he barred, that was the Highwayman tale. This was doubtless owing to the strong prejudice that existed in those days against the Highwayman story. Personally, I cannot see why a Highwayman should be any worse than a Pirate, and of course he was not, but the Highwayman story had got a bad reputation owing to certain lurid examples. The famous Jack Harkaway stories first appeared in the Boys of England. "Jack Harkaway's School-days" appeared in Vol. 10 (1871) and was followed by various sequels. The Authors who contributed to the journal included Charles Stevens, W. T. Townsend, Verne St. John, Percy B. St. John, Capt. Mayne Reid, James Greenwood, J. C. Stagg. These names appear in the early vols. but later on no Author's names appear.

The Christmas number was an ev-

ent always looked forward to by the youthful readers. It consisted of the usual number but in addition there was a supplement containing a long complete story, suitable for the festive season. It was invariably a ghost story. Brett was ambitious and enterprising and was very proud of the fact that his journal was subscribed to by H. R. H. Prince Albert, the late Prince Imperial of France and Count William Bernstorff, and had these names printed on the front page of The Boys of England. One of the pleasing features of the journal was the fine historical stories that appeared from time to time. To mention a few: "Chevy Chase, or The Battle of the Border," Vol. 1, 1866. "Jack Cade, the Rebel of London," Vol. 3, 1868. "Edgar, the Young Knight of Warwick" Vol. 4, 1868. "Monmouth, or the Axed Crown," Vol. 8, 1870. "Joan of Arc" Vol. 24, 1878. "Thomas C. Beckett," Vol. 40, 1886. "The Boy Kings of England," Vol. 44-45, 1888. "The Outlawed Douglas," Vol. 60, 1896. I shall always maintain that I learned more English history from stories like these than I ever did at school.

American interest was also largely represented in Brett's selection of tales. The following appeared: "Columbus to the Rescue," Vol. 5, 1869. "Buffalo Bill," Vol. 7, 1870. (Reprinted from New York Weekly). "Dick Raynor in South America," Vol. 22, 1877. "Jack of Warwick, or The Cowboy of Texas," Vol. 46, 1889. "The Cowboy King," Vol. 52, 1892, and many others.

Edwin J. Brett was the possessor of one of the finest collections of Arms and Armour in the country and a very interesting series of articles and stories appeared in The Boys of Eng-

land, Vols. 47, 48, 1889-90. The various suits of Armour were illustrated and described and this was followed by a ghost story. The illustrations in the B. O. E. were of excellent quality. A relation of Brett, the well known artist Hebblethwaite contributed many of the pictures in the early vols. In 1891 The Boys of England celebrated its Silver Jubilee, having run for 25 years and a banquet was given in honour of Brett, at which many of the leading lights of the literary profession were present. A full account of the proceedings was published in the B. O. E.

In spite of the prejudice existing against the so-called "Penny Dreadful," those boys who enjoyed the privilege of reading The Boys of England had much to be thankful for.

NEWSY NEWS by Ralph F. Cummings

W. E. Bennett says he had a light dose of ptomaine poisoning along in July or August, and is a whole lot better now, it's no fun to be poisoned. A few years ago, Stewart Bender and his whole family were down with it.

Talbot C. Hatch is after New York Detective Library #85.

Quite a few authors wrote under the pseudonym of "An Old Scout," in Pluck and Luck, Marline Manly was one of the writers, and John D. Doud's right name was H. K. Shackelford.

Ellnor Glyn, the noted novelist, died over in England, Sept. 23rd, 1943, age 78 years old. Some of her famous works were "Three Weeks," of which was so daring that it shocked grandmothers, and she was offered \$40,000 for the manuscript of it. Mrs. Glyn even taught Rudolph Valentino how to make love as a star in the silent movies.

Just heard from Henry Steele, that Mathew Hunter the English author of "The Reception" in poetry. This is a dream he had of a parade of The Boys of England, Young Men of Great Britain, The Boys Standard, The Boys World, Tyburn Dick, Ching Ching, Black Bess, etc. It's very interesting too.

Creston Wright believes he has one of the best Secret Service collections in the country, thanks to George French and other dealers, and Secret Service in nice condition today, the originals, oh boy, he's got some thing

after my own heart. Whoopee!

C. Duprez says he has a small collection of old timers for a start, such as New York Detective, Wide Awake, Pluck & Luck, and so forth, says he'd like to have some Three Chums and so forth. We all started with only a few novels, Pal. Says he'll take pictures of novels for anyone who wishes to send some on to him, anything, anywhere, anytime.

Ye editor, Ralph Cummings paid a visit to Benjamin W. Hallett, Marstons Mills, Mass., Wed. evening, Sept. 22, 1943 and had a fine talk on the old time novels and story papers, such as Good News, Frank Leslie's Boys & Girls Weekly, Munro's Girls & Boys of America and many other old timers. Ben was 70 years old the 19th of September.

Col. Charles D. Randolph has sent in for Roundup two fine poems on both Pawnee Bill and Diamond Dick, which will be used in Roundup in the future.

George Barton, continued from Oct. Roundup—"Treasure Island" by R. L. Stevenson, was first published in "Young Folks," a penny weekly — started in No. 565, Vol. 19, Oct. 1st, 1881, and finished at Chapter 28, in No. 582, Vol. 20, Jan. 28th, 1882. Its position was in the back pages, and it had only four very ordinary and commonplace illustrations, two being given with the first instalment. Its original title was "The Sea Cook," but by the advice of Mr. James Henderson the publisher, it was changed to "The Treasure Island." Stevenson was adverse to his name appearing as its author, and as it was the role of "Young Folks" to publish all contributors names, it bears the name of Capt. George North (Stevenson's pen name) and it was worth noting that Stevenson was only paid 12/6 per column for "Treasure Island." This at the time was considered a good price for the work. How many fortunes have been made out of this splendid story since it first appeared it would be difficult to estimate. Stevenson followed under the same "nom-de-plume" with "The Black Arrow. A tale of Tunstall Forest" in No. 656 Vol. 22, June 30, 1883, and this was followed by the equally famous story "Kidnapped, or The Lad with the Silver Buttons," being the memoirs of the Adventures of David Balfour. This story appeared in No. 805, Vol. 28,

May 1st, 1886. Both these stories occupied a better position in the journal, and were better illustrated with the initials of W. B., the engraver being J. Swain. "Kidnapped" bears its authors name in full.

E. H. Burrage's advent into boys literature was marked by two poems: in "The Young Gentlemen of Britain," an early Emmett Publication. In No. 16, Feb. 6th, 1869, appeared his first work, a very clever poem entitled "John Brown, Ye Modern Knight." This was followed by another

equally as clever in No. 18, entitled "The Man at the Wheel."

Maximilian Foster, 71, magazine writer, journalist and author of many short stories and serials for the Saturday Evening Post, died Sept. 22, 1943. He also wrote such novels as "In the Forest," "The Trap," "Bubbles," and three plays "The Whirlpool," "Rich Man, Poor Man," "Somek."

Wanted—Young Wild West Weeklies, and others. Mrs. Floyd La Gesse, R. #4, Box 327, Muskegon, Mich.

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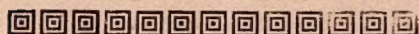
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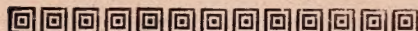
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